

## MISSOURI: MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

Nothing reflects the rich history and culture of Missouri more than its food. With agriculture as one its largest industries, Missouri's farmers, ranchers and producers supply an almost endless parade of edible fare that is served in restaurants all over the state. So why not explore Missouri's heart and soul by taking a culinary tour at local eateries that are steeped in centuries-old traditions and culture? It's an experience that fulfills both the mind and stomach.

Branson, Missouri

### A Feast of the Senses

Dubbed by 60 Minutes as the "Country Music Mecca," Branson, Mo., is putting on its biggest party of the year from April 8 to 12 at Dick Clark's American Bandstand Theater complex: **BransonFest 2008**. It's five fun-filled days showcasing the best that Branson has to offer — all in one location! Listen to world-class musicians and local talent perform live at the Real American Entertainment Tent. Browse through collections of Ozark Mountain art and craftsmanship created by nationally recognized local artists at the Arts, Culture & Heritage event. But best of all, sample the city's local and traditional dishes — from ribs and pizza to soups and sandwiches — at the Taste of Branson area. All in all, this is the place to experience Branson in all its glory. [bransonfest.org](http://bransonfest.org), 877.588.1957, Airport: Springfield-Branson National, (SGF).



Columbus, Missouri

### Eclectic Eatery

For a change of pace, fly to The District in downtown Columbus, Mo., where a vibrant, chic and bohemian atmosphere mixes with historic architecture, sidewalk cafés and retail shops. Eat at **Addison's Bar & Grill**, where the artwork on its walls is as enticing as its food. Sample the Addison's Crab Rangoon Dip, billed as "an extrovert's variation of a favorite" — a creamy combination of crab, cream cheese and veggies served with wonton chips and assorted vegetables. For happy hour, try the bar's many draft beers for only \$2.50 per pint. Or taste the Baby Back Ribs, slow-cooked and smothered in chipotle BBQ sauce. Then browse through the bold-hued original paintings by local artist David Spear adorning the walls. It's a slice of urban Americana at the heart of the Midwest. [addisonssophias.com/addisons](http://addisonssophias.com/addisons), 573.256.1995, Airport: Columbia Regional (COU).



Carthage, Missouri

### Get Your Kicks on Routs 66

Drive down historic Route 66 to locate **The Carthage Deli**, a favorite stop for Route 66 travelers in Carthage, Mo. Situated in the Old Bank of Carthage building at the heart of Carthage Square, the 1950s-themed diner serves the best good-old-fashioned comfort food for miles. Try a hearty breakfast and order the Ham Steak Meal, served with a warm biscuit, creamy gravy and rich coffee. Order the Grilled



Chicken Wrap, topped with grilled onions, slathered with ranch dressing and sprinkled with lettuce, tomato and cheddar cheese on a garlic and herb wrap. And don't even think of leaving the restaurant without

tasting the mouth-watering Turtle Sundae: vanilla ice cream covered in caramel and chocolate and topped with pecans, whipped cream and a cherry. [carthagedeli.com](http://carthagedeli.com), 417.358.8820, Airport: Joplin Regional (JLN).

Cape Girardeau, Missouri

### A Night at the Opera

At the heart of Cape Girardeau's historical district lies **The Royal N'Orleans**, a 50-year-old restaurant tucked inside a 150-year-old opera house that showcased outlaw Cole Younger and pianist "Blind Boone" in its hey-day. Try the Shrimp and Crayfish Salad — steamed shellfish piled on top of tossed iceberg and romaine lettuce with artichoke hearts, tomatoes and black olives. Order the Lobster Bisque — a creamy delight served in a generous tureen of succulent lobster and tomato puree. The Oyster Casino from the Bistro Menu is simply elegant, with freshly baked oyster on the half-shell topped with Ricardo sauce, bacon and top-secret seasonings. And if you can tear yourself away from eating the yummy fare, keep your eyes and ears wide open for a ghostly apparition that is rumored to frequent the place. [royalnorleans.com](http://royalnorleans.com), 573.335.8191, Airport: Cape Girardeau Regional (CGI).



Missouri

### Through the Grapevine

One of Missouri's best-kept secrets is its 70-plus wineries that are fast becoming superstars among wine aficionados and a testament to the many immigrants and cultures that settled in the region. **Adam Puchta Winery** ([adampuchtawine.com](http://adampuchtawine.com), 573.486.5596) in Hermann, Mo. (Hermann Municipal, 63M) is the oldest family-owned winery in Missouri with a German heritage. Try Berry Black, with its natural sweet fruit characteristics; Chardonel, with its light oak complexity; or Vignoles, perfect with Thai food.



For Italian vino, **Meramec Vineyards** ([meramecvineyards.com](http://meramecvineyards.com), 573.265.7847) in Saint James, Mo., (Rolla National, VIH) offers wines in the American and Euro tradition. Sample Silvio's Red, a blend of Norton and Stark Star grapes; Bistro Gold, a dry white wine; and Catawba Blush, a light semi-sweet wine.



Get a taste of France in St. Genevieve, Mo. (Lambert-St. Louis International, STL) at **Chaumette Vineyards & Winery** ([chaumette.com](http://chaumette.com), 573.474.1000), with roots dating back to 13th-century France. Discover the 2005 Big Sky Café Big T Chardonel, with its crisp citrus flavor; the 2006 Traminette, perfect as an aperitif; and the 2005 Assemblage, crafted in a northern Rhone style.

City of Independence, Missouri

### The Truman Connection

The City of Independence, Mo., has been home to several famous people, but there is one particular hometown hero that holds a special place in the hearts of its residents: the late U.S. president Harry S. Truman. You can find everything-Truman throughout the city, but there is one unlikely place where you'll encounter a piece of Truman lore: **Clinton's Soda Fountain**. This old-fashioned "drugstore" is the site of young Truman's first job as a soda-fountain clerk. Order Harry's Favorite, a butterscotch sundae with chocolate ice cream. Or try the delish Chili Dog with Cheese and—this is a must—wash it down with an old-fashioned phosphate, an effervescent soft drink with soda water and flavoring (sample the strawberry) that originated in late-18th-century France. [clintonssodafountain.com](http://clintonssodafountain.com), 816.833.2046, Airport: Kansas City International (MCI).

